



# MSSG-22 Newsletter

## DECEMBER 2005

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### From the Commanding Officer...



Dear Friends and Families,

Once again, I'm writing to report the progress of our deployment and preparations for potential missions. A month has come and gone since we left our homeport of Moorehead City, North Carolina. During this time, your Marine or Sailor has sailed across eight different time zones, ported in beautiful ports of call, such as Cittavecchia, Italy and Rota, Spain. They have crossed the Straits of Gibraltar, seen the Suez Canal, and the many wonderful sites along the way. For some, being on this side of the world is a first. For the older "salts", it's a welcoming, if not familiar, routine and greeted with smiles.

Our Trans-Atlantic crossing was not without incident---for many, it meant a few days trying to gain their sea legs. Yup---rough seas, howling winds, and a ship that rocks in every direction, are the definite ingredients for sea sickness. Everyone survived, a few pounds lighter, and a new gained respect for "prepare for heavy seas".

We celebrated our Marine Corps Birthday in grand fashion. On 10 November, our band of Marines and Sailors, formed ranks on the flight deck of the USS Carter Hall to pay tribute to our Corps. The crew and Marines witnessed precise execution of this important ceremony. The Ceremony was a combined event, formed from BLT 1/2, MSSG-22, and the crew of the Carter Hall. Everyone came away with a higher degree of motivation, *esprit de corps*, and admiration for our Marine Corps. The ceremony was followed by a day of relaxation and superb feast of steak and lobster provided by the crew of the Carter Hall – a great day all in all.

The Marines and Sailors have been training hard preparing for potential missions. Not a day goes by on ship that Marines are not seen training, learning their trade, or preparing their gear and equipment. The Marines and Sailors of MSSG-22 will be ready when and if called upon. Their motivation and drive is what sets them apart---what an honor and privilege it is to serve along side these young men and women.

As the Holiday season is quickly approaching, I want to personally wish you and yours the best. I ask that you remember that special Marine or Sailor, keep them in your heart and prayers---and they'll do the same for you. Your letters and packages are always a welcome treat - trust me - for all of us. :) Happy Holidays!

**Sempri Fi, LtCol Chiarotti**

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# TRANSPORTATION SUPPORT DETACHMENT

by 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Merles

## Greetings!

At the time of writing this article we are in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. We are finally on our way to the fight. After a year of training and providing Combat Service Support, as only TS Det Marines can, we are finally going to take the fight to the enemy. As I write this, TS Marines on all three Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) ships, (including Cpl Mullins who is REALLY living the "good life" on merchant shipping), are highly motivated and ready to write their story in Marine Corps history.

TS Det continues to be the one of the busiest detachments in the MSSG. Since the last newsletter, we have made our final convoy movement to Morehead City Port for staging -- (everyone sighs in relief!) TS Marines worked extremely hard to get the vehicles and FC-100 squared away before our deployment. Cpl Spinnato led a team including Cpl Miller, LCpl Thompson, Cpl Carlson, Cpl Schuster, and others that broke down and built over 50 MTRV tires ... an impressive feat for so little time and personnel. Cpl Kelly led a team that ensured appropriate equipment was on the trucks. Heavy Equipment Marines: LCpl Taylor, LCpl Fitzsimmons, LCpl Ludlum, LCpl Speno, LCpl Rinehart and the three from the Engineer Detachment: Sgt White, Cpl Gordon, and PFC Barrett were instrumental in getting all the loads on the vehicles, into the right containers, and getting the job done.



In the port, TS Marines, most of the Engineer detachment, and a few others were able to "luck out" and have some decent weather as we sat at the port and waited for the ships to arrive. While we reloaded a few trucks, Marines were able to relax, play cards, or even watch a movie and play X-BOX. As a side note: even though we had plenty of tasty MREs for dining, the local Domino's was able to make some good money that weekend--(we just wanted to make sure we still had MREs for any HA Camps we might have to set up ;)

## OOHRAH!

The on-load for both the USS Austin and the USS Carter Hall were smooth and efficient. Although the USS Nassau got off to a slow start, I'm sure the on load of that vessel was also smooth and efficient. Much credit to a good on load has to go to our Combat Cargo (CC) Marines. They are the first Marines to get on the ship and the last to get off. They are good at working with the US NAVY in packing the ship tight and getting all of our stuff (which is considerable) to fit. In addition to packing the ship they also play a big role in daily Navy Operations whether that is flight ops, Helicopter Support Teams (HSTs) from the ship's landing pad, or vehicle griping. TS Marines make up the core of all the Combat Cargo Marines on each of the three ships. Sgt Streeter, Cpl Pack, and Cpl

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Whitaker are the head honchos on the “Big Deck” and Cpl Miller and Cpl Marcondes run the show on the Austin. The US Carter Hall, where most of the MSSG Marines live, has the most TS CC Marines on board. Sgt Donald, Sgt Nissel, Cpl Kohn, Cpl Lowe, LCpl Verhaar, LCpl Maddox, and LCpl Accetturro are the TS CC Marines, but they are also joined by Sgt Webb (ENG) and PFC Williams (SUP) on Combat Cargo. They all play a very important role on ship and are all doing a great job!

I know in that last newsletter I said that our Marines on the Austin were having too much fun...I wasn't serious. However, comma (*pause for effect*), Sgt Williams, the Motor Transport Operations NCOIC, has really been pushing the Marines on the Austin to get some good convoy training done and I know we will all benefit because of it.



The Carter Hall Marines have also been busy with training. Most of this training is NCO led but GySgt Cox lets “the Lt” teach a class every now and again. Cpl Prindable, our new Motor T Platoon Sergeant, has done a good job of ensuring the Marines arrive at this good training. HN Young (MED) gave a solid class on the IFAK and “Doc” Gardner has been giving Basic Life Saving classes to six new TS Marines every week. In addition, Cpl Prindable has held several personnel and weapons inspections, Cpl Spinnato has led convoy ops TDGs, Cpl Wood has given the Marines refresher classes on the Mk-19, and Cpl Prindable and Cpl Spinnato have given classes on the .50 Cal machine gun. The Marines have also received classes on leadership, rifle fire and its effects, and the Non-NCOs participated in a guided discussion on A Message to Garcia. Marines can look forward to more training that you will hear about in our next newsletter.

**Congratulations**

Congratulations to our newly promoted Marines...SSgt Doerr is now a member of the Staff NCO ranks after a well deserved and over due promotion. I know that we can count on him to continue providing solid and positive leadership to all the Marines that he meets. Also, congratulations to Sgt Nissel, Cpl Garza,

Cpl Ramos, Cpl Webster, and LCpl Thompson on their well deserved promotions...they are definitely on their way!

I have been serving with most of the Marines of the TS Det since our six month deployment to Twenty-nine

**We are...TS!**

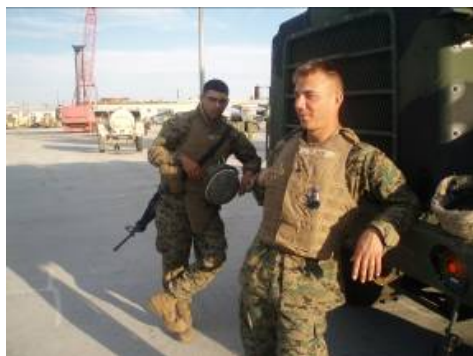
Palms, CA, and I can truly say that I am proud of the great improvements that we have made as a team. The Marines might not have noticed the changes--the transformation-- that they are making, because they have been so busy and working so many long hours, but your Marine, when he or she returns home to you, will be a better Marine than when he or she joined CSSD-22 back in October 2004. We train as hard as we do and we stress the details because lives are saved in the details. I have complete confidence in the abilities of our Landing Support, Air Delivery, Heavy Equipment, and Motor Transport Marines to do their duty. For 230 years the Marine Corps has been asked to do the untried, the unbearable, the unthinkable and we have gone and done those things as only we Marines can. We are cut of the same cloth as those Marines that have gone before and I am extremely proud of our TS Marines.

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***Semper Fidelis and Happy 230<sup>th</sup> Birthday from all of us at TS DET!***



**COMM**

by: 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Zavalla

The communications detachment is enjoying continued success this holiday season. First the Marines and the ship's crew visited Italy at the end of November. The Marines enjoyed touring Rome and seeing the Vatican, Coliseum, and other great historical sights. They have definitely broadened their cultural awareness and expanded their horizons with great Italian food as well!

We have eight Marines that were promoted on the first of December. Among them are a new SNCO, SSgt Hernandez; and our new Sergeants, Castro, Dennis, and McGill. Our new corporals are Hart, Coletta, and Haas (meritoriously).

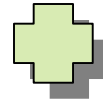
Things are going great on ship with lots of training, maintenance, and drills. Be on the lookout for the weekly email that goes out to the parents and family of the COMM Det. If you do not currently receive these emails, please contact me at this address:

[raymond.zavalla@usmc.mil](mailto:raymond.zavalla@usmc.mil)

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## MEDICAL

by HM2 Barberan



*"If you're looking for trouble never seen, mess with the corpsman; the one in Marine Corps green."*  
- Marine Corps Cadence

A young Lance Corporal asked why he should receive the small pox vaccine. It was explained how the shot exposes the body to a small portion of the live virus - enough for the body to fight off and retain the proper antibodies should the person be introduced to the actual small pox germ. It's the same process used with the flu vaccine and all the other immunizations. He pulls up his sleeve and uncovers his forearm and tells me to "shoot-him up."

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of November on the galley of USS Carter Hall, a group of Marines and Sailors listened attentively to the Corpsman wearing digital-green cammies. Their faces were fringing at the graphic pictures presented on the screen. Some of them covered their eyes as they shook their heads in dismay as they viewed a body covered with an outbreak of small pox. As one sailor said, "Makes you want to wash your hands every time you touch something."

The Health and Services Detachment of MSSG-22 (Marine Service Support Group) under the supervision of HM2 (SW) Guidry, Preventive Medical Technician, executed another "Shot-ex" onboard USS Carter Hall while underway. Not much of a challenge for the experienced corpsman, but holding a syringe while the ship is rocking back and forth requires some skill. Administering the flu vaccine and inoculating the men and women onboard with small pox, is all a part of supporting the MEU's mission as a "Force in Readiness."

"Is this going to hurt doc?" asked another Marine. The Corpsman's response, "I'll make sure you won't feel a thing." The needle itself causes very little injury to the patient, but the administering of the inoculation should cause some discomfort.

HM3 Mclaughlin, the most junior Corpsman of the MSSG states, "I don't mind giving Marines shots, its good training." Meanwhile in the Battle Aid Station, HN Young, HSS Operating Room Technician modestly says, "I feel like I contributed to the well-being and medical readiness to the members of the Marine Corps." Another Marine while in the berthing says, "I don't mind getting stuck a hundred times, as long as Doc knows what he is doing." And we do!

A tee-shirt floating around Camp Lejeune once read, "The best medicine on the field is fire superiority, power ashore, and a Navy Corpsman." The Navy and Marine Corps have worked together for over 230 years. We have what it takes to get the mission done. And one of our greatest tasks is making sure that the Marines of the 22<sup>nd</sup> MEU are at fighting level – whether it be through preventive medicine, through vaccination, health education, first aid classes, or an oral prophylaxis.

At the end of "shot-ex", you have the corpsmen of MSSG-22, together with members from the Battalion Landing Team, making entries into the immunization log book, completing small pox forms,

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passing out bottles of hand sanitizers and band-aids. Some of the Marines and Sailors expressed their gratitude and others simply moved along with their every day lives.

Corpsmen do more than just give shots. Along with *Sick-Call*, FMF (Fleet Marine Force) classes are led by HM2 (FMF) Harkey. Each person searches for signatures for various ESWS (Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist) categories, they complete entries into SAMS (Ship's Automated Medical System), and they work diligently at the never-ending duty of updating medical records and shot-cards. Corpsman usually wake up at 5 a.m. and work till the wee hours of the morning making sure that the medical readiness of MSSG-22 is at or near 100 percent before entering into theater.



## **Engineers Continue Musical Pursuits Underway.**

by Jeffery Gordon



Music plays an important part in the lives of many MSSG Engineers. Given the various backgrounds represented among the Engineers, it is no surprise that musical taste also runs the gamut. Sampling the various CD's and MP3 players neatly stowed among the Engineer berthing area, one can find songs ranging from classical to hip-hop, country to punk rock, and everything in between. While a majority of people brought along their favorite tunes to pass the time, some Engineers are using free time to create their own.

LCpl Carr is often found jamming away on his electric guitar down on the 02 level. Though he has never taken lessons, LCpl Carr has been teaching himself for over eight years. It is generally accepted among that Marines that, "he can totally shred." LCpl Carr began by simply trying to reproduce popular rock songs, now he is creating music with a style that is all his own.

On the opposite end of the spectrum we have PFC Barrett and Cpl Louis. Both are accomplished rap artist who write their own rhymes set to custom beats. Both can be found scribbling down verses, whenever an inspiration hits them. It is not uncommon for fellow Marines to find bits of paper, MRE boxes, or scrap lumber covered with innovative lyrics. The effort has paid off for each Marine. PFC Barrett found recent success selling his independently written and produced album "Dollars and Cents" around the Jacksonville area. Cpl Louis experienced similar results with his distribution of "The Champ is Back." While both received positive feedback, it's a matter of condition among the two as to which one "topped the charts." Each hopes to find a place in the music industry upon completion of their time in the Marine Corps.

Each of these Marines has served to spread their love of music throughout the detachment. LCpl Ballard can be found toting around LCpl Carr's spare guitar. LCpl Carr explains, "He has a lot of potential and is learning very fast." LCpl Ballard is not the only Marine found picking away the intro to their favorite songs, LCpl Carr is willing to instruct anyone who wants to learn. Rumor has it he has

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even taught Engineer OIC Lieutenant Andrew Lathrop a few chords. Apparently an Underground Rap CD has also been created by the Detachment, with samples from or about almost every Engineer in the MSSG. Those who have claimed to hear the CD explain it's an excellent piece of musicianship, although some sensitive content is delaying its public release. It is tentatively scheduled for release some time well after all the Engineers end their terms of enlistment.

Although current operational tempo may keep the Engineers taxed for time, it is assured that each will find some time to put a little music into their lives.

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## Military Police Detachment



Left to Right: Cpl Warden, LCpl Riley, LCpl Emerick, and PFC Raasch.

Eleven months ago, thirteen Military Policemen, were all combat experienced. Throughout the past eleven months, four Marines have moved on for various reasons. Four new Marines, one of them being a Cpl, 2 LCpl's, and the other one a PFC have replaced these Marines. None of these Marines have been to combat before, but they're all quick learners and have stepped up to the challenge.

Over the past seven months since we received the new Marines, extensive training has taken place. Training dealing with EPW's, detainees, entry control points, pressure points and control tactics, basic escorts, and most importantly, all of the heavy weapons we will be using in country.

With receiving these Marines at different periods of time throughout the workup, some of them were able to train with us more than others. LCpl Riley was the first one to join the detachment in early March. Having come right from the school house, this was a big step for him but we had a lot of time to work with him before we left. LCpl Riley will now be a driver for one of the truck teams. Cpl Warden was the next to join us in April. Then a LCpl transferring from Albany Georgia, picked up Cpl within a couple of months and then took on the responsibilities as a truck team leader and our supply NCO. PFC Raasch was the next one to join up with the detachment.

Straight from the school house in late August, PFC Raasch entered the detachment and is now going to take on the driving role for one of the truck teams. LCpl Emerick was the last of the four to join up with us and came straight from the school house. She was a PFC then and quickly picked up LCpl within the first two weeks of being with the unit. LCpl Emerick only had about two weeks with the detachment before we deployed. LCpl Emerick will also be a driver for one of the four truck teams. She is very fast to pick things up and anxious to learn more about the job.

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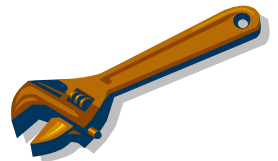
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Now that the time has come and we are only a short time away from entering into hostile territory, these Marines are becoming more and more confident and will excel. The 22<sup>nd</sup> MEU Military Police Detachment is always ready and eager to receive the call and serve their country no matter the circumstances.

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## Maintenance!

1. Maintenance Detachment has been really busy this past month before leaving on deployment. All the Marines spent time off during the previous month during block leave. Many traveled long distances to spend time with family and friends. This leave period was much deserved and the Maintenance Detachment Marines all returned safely without incident. Great Job!
2. Once the Marines returned, the daunting task began to ensure that all MSSG 22's equipment was inspected, repaired and ready for the upcoming deployment. The Maintenance Detachment Marines did a phenomenal job ensuring this task was accomplished and they did so in a timely manner.
3. The welders of Maintenance Detachment, Cpl's Davison and Thomas, completed a very important task this month. They modified the assault step and rear operator armor panels on the High Mobility Multi Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV). The modifications done to these vehicles will allow the vehicles to be safely loaded aboard LCAC assault crafts and allow the operator to communicate effectively during convoy operations while deployed. Great job Corporals!
4. Maintenance Detachment would like to wish LCpl Dones a BIG Congrats on her recent marriage to LCpl Rojas. They make a great couple. At the same time, Maintenance Detachment wishes her a fond farewell on her future endeavors as she returns to 2<sup>nd</sup> Maintenance Battalion to assume her new duties. She will be missed by all.
5. Maintenance Detachment would like to congratulate the following Marines.



<b>Receiving the Navy Marine Corps Achievement Medal:</b> LCpl Dones Rojas LCpl Lanier	<b>Promotion to their present rank:</b> Sgt Stanley Sgt Buhls Cpl Feliz Cpl Madrid
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***Semper Maintenance to all and a job well done!***

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# X-BOX TEAM CHALLENGE!

by Chaplain Hicks

There's no doubt that our modern culture is wrapped-up and hypnotically transfixed to the wonder of computer gaming. With that in mind, we decided to take advantage of this technology driven fervor and create an exciting avenue of fun and entertainment for our Marines and Sailors. People for ages have loved spectator sports, so we combined these two obsessions into an event called "X-Box Team Challenge." By connecting two X-Box game consoles together and using two DLP projectors, up to eight people at a time can battle it out in cyberspace while a gathered crowd can easily watch the wall-sized image from anywhere in the room.

In mid-November onboard USS Carter Hall, this concept became a reality. Well over a 100 Marines and Sailors gathered throughout the evening to watch and play a series of elimination matches of Microsoft's® famous Halo-2® software game. Teams quickly formed and numerous competitions ensued. One game was so close that when the final point was scored the room burst into ear-piercing cheering, high-fives, and body-slamming celebrations! To say the least, the event was a success.

Congratulations are in-line for four members of LAR; Cpl Lavelle, Cpl Bowles, PFC Woods, and HN Crockett. Their team won the overall competition and walked-away with gift certificates they could use in the ship's store and the satisfaction of knowing they are the best gamers onboard (...at least for now).



# MSSG-22

